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## **AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES IN MICHIGAN: SECOND QUARTER 2005**

The average weekly wage in Kent County increased 5.3 percent from the second quarter of 2004 to the second quarter of 2005, the largest advance among Michigan's 10 counties with 75,000 or more jobs. Wayne County had the second highest wage growth at 4.4 percent, followed by Ingham County at 4.1 percent. Oakland County had the highest average weekly wage level in the State at \$913, followed by Wayne County at \$894. (See table 1.) Regional Commissioner Jay A. Mousa noted that among Michigan's 10 largest counties, 3 reported wage growth above the national rate of 3.9 percent, while 4 had wages above the national level of \$751.

### **Wage Levels**

Among Michigan's 10 largest counties, Oakland, Wayne, Washtenaw, and Macomb, all had wages exceeding \$800 and averaged from \$79 to \$162 above the national level. Average weekly wages in Oakland County and Wayne County were 22 and 19 percent, respectively, above the national average, ranking them 34<sup>th</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> among the 322 largest counties in the U.S. All four of these counties placed in the top quarter of the nationwide ranking by wage level.

At the other end of the spectrum, Saginaw and Ottawa Counties reported the lowest average weekly wages in the State at \$673 and \$671, respectively, ranking them 209<sup>th</sup> and 214<sup>th</sup>. Overall, none of the largest counties in Michigan had wages levels in the bottom quarter of the national ranking.

Across the country, average weekly wages were higher than the national average in 116 of the largest 322 U.S. counties. New York County, N.Y., held the top position among the large counties with an average weekly wage of \$1,350. Santa Clara, Calif., was second with an average wage of \$1,316, followed by San Mateo, Calif. (\$1,267), Arlington, Va. (\$1,257), and Washington, D.C. (\$1,236).

The lowest average weekly wages were reported in Cameron County, Texas (\$463), followed by the counties of Hidalgo, Texas (\$473), Horry, S.C. (\$499), Yakima, Wash. (\$509), and Tulare, Calif. (\$532).

At the state level, the average weekly wage in Michigan was \$768, \$17 above the nationwide figure, ranking 12<sup>th</sup> highest among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. (See table 2.) The highest five wage levels in the nation were in the District of Columbia (\$1,236); Connecticut (\$946); Massachusetts (\$916); New York (\$913); and

New Jersey (\$901). Average weekly wages in this group were 20 percent or more above that for the nation. At the other end of the spectrum, four states had wage levels averaging less than 75 percent of national earnings: South Dakota (\$543), Montana (\$553), Mississippi (\$556), and North Dakota (\$561).

### **Over-the-Year Changes**

Three of Michigan's 10 large counties recorded wage growth above the national increase of 3.9 percent in the second quarter of 2005. (See table 1.) As mentioned, Kent County's 5.3-percent wage gain was the largest increase in the State, ranking 41<sup>st</sup> in the nation. The average weekly wage in Wayne County, the State's largest county based on employment, increased 4.4 percent, ranking it 90<sup>th</sup> in wage growth nationwide. Ingham County was the only other county in the State to record wage growth above that for the nation, averaging 4.1 percent.

Two counties, Kalamazoo and Saginaw, had wage gains of less than 1 percent over the year; these increases were among the lowest in the nation, ranking them 309<sup>th</sup> and 304<sup>th</sup>, respectively. Other counties experiencing below-average wage growth were Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, Genesee, and Ottawa.

Among the largest counties, Webb Texas, led the nation in growth in average weekly wages, with an increase of 11.3 percent over the year. San Mateo, Calif., was second with 10.6 percent growth, followed by the counties of Clark, Nev., (9.4 percent), Collier, Fla., (8.4 percent), Fairfax, Va., (8.1 percent), and Rockingham, N.H., (7.6 percent).

Six counties experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages. Pierce County, Wash., had the largest decrease, -7.9 percent, followed by the counties of Clayton, Ga. (-6.3 percent), Rock Island, Ill. (-2.9 percent), Spartanburg, S.C. (-2.3 percent), and Trumbull, Ohio (-1.3 percent).

At the state level, the average weekly wage in Michigan increased 3.4 percent, ranking it 31<sup>st</sup> among the 50 states and District of Columbia. The neighboring states of Ohio and Indiana had smaller wage gains, averaging 3.1 and 2.8 percent, respectively. (See table 2.) The highest over-the-year wage growth in the second quarter of 2005 was recorded by Nevada (7.7 percent) and the lowest, by Vermont (1.6 percent).

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from reports submitted by employers subject to state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The 8.6 million employer reports cover 132.8 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage is computed by dividing the total quarterly payroll of employees covered by UI programs by the average monthly number of these employees. This number then is divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/cew/>; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised (see Note below) and will not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

### **Additional statistics and other information**

An annual bulletin, *Employment and Wages*, features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2004 edition of this bulletin contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the fourth quarter 2004 version of this news release. *Employment and Wages Annual Averages, 2004* is available for sale from the United States Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250, telephone 866-512-1800, outside Washington, D.C. Within Washington, D.C., the telephone number is 202-512-1800. The fax number is 202-512-2104. Also, the 2004 bulletin is available in a portable document format (PDF) on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn04.htm>.

QCEW-based news releases issued by other regional offices have been placed at one convenient Web site location, <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewregional.htm>.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

For personal assistance or further information on the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Midwest Information Office in Chicago at (312) 353-1880 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. CT.

#### **NOTE**

QCEW data are the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. For this reason, county and industry data are not designed to be used as a time series.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. The potential differences result from several causes. Differences between BLS and State published data may be due to the continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

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**Table 1. Covered (1) employment and wages in the United States and the 10 largest counties in Michigan, second quarter 2005(2)**

| Area                   | Employment               | Average Weekly Wage (3) |                               |  |  |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
|                        | June 2005<br>(thousands) | Average weekly wage     | National ranking by level (4) | Percent change, second quarter 2004-05 (5) | National ranking by percent change (4) |
| United States (6)..... | 132,808.3                | \$751                   | --                            | 3.9  | --                                     |
| Michigan.....          | 4,366.7                  | 768                     | 12                            | 3.4  | 31                                     |
| Genesee, MI.....       | 150.4                    | 705                     | 156                           | 1.4  | 286                                    |
| Ingham, MI.....        | 159.9                    | 729                     | 134                           | 4.1  | 112                                    |
| Kalamazoo, MI.....     | 117.2                    | 683                     | 192                           | 0.4  | 308                                    |
| Kent, MI.....          | 341.0                    | 711                     | 148                           | 5.3  | 41                                     |
| Macomb, MI.....        | 333.6                    | 830                     | 61                            | 3.1  | 199                                    |
| Oakland, MI.....       | 729.9                    | 913                     | 34                            | 2.6  | 237                                    |
| Ottawa, MI.....        | 115.4                    | 671                     | 214                           | 1.1  | 297                                    |
| Saginaw, MI.....       | 90.0                     | 673                     | 209                           | 0.7  | 304                                    |
| Washtenaw, MI.....     | 193.5                    | 856                     | 53                            | 2.3  | 252                                    |
| Wayne, MI.....         | 797.2                    | 894                     | 41                            | 4.4  | 90                                     |

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

(2) Data are preliminary.

(3) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(4) Ranking does not include the county of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

(5) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(6) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

**Table 2. Covered(1) employment and wages by state, second quarter 2005(2)**

| State                     | Employment            | Average weekly wage (3) |                           |  |                                    |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
|                           | June 2005 (thousands) | Average weekly wage     | National ranking by level | Percent change, second quarter 2004-05 | National ranking by percent change |
| United States (4).....    | 132,808.3             | \$751                   | -                         | 3.9                                    | -                                  |
| Alabama.....              | 1,900.6               | 644                     | 33                        | 3.9                                    | 24                                 |
| Alaska.....               | 315.1                 | 759                     | 15                        | 3.3                                    | 39                                 |
| Arizona.....              | 2,429.7               | 723                     | 20                        | 4.3                                    | 11                                 |
| Arkansas.....             | 1,158.2               | 592                     | 46                        | 4.2                                    | 13                                 |
| California.....           | 15,387.2              | 849                     | 6                         | 3.5                                    | 30                                 |
| Colorado.....             | 2,215.9               | 769                     | 11                        | 3.4                                    | 31                                 |
| Connecticut.....          | 1,676.5               | 946                     | 2                         | 4.3                                    | 11                                 |
| Delaware.....             | 421.3                 | 797                     | 9                         | 3.1                                    | 42                                 |
| District of Columbia..... | 675.1                 | 1,236                   | 1                         | 4.1                                    | 15                                 |
| Florida.....              | 7,656.1               | 689                     | 24                        | 5.2                                    | 3                                  |
| Georgia.....              | 3,937.6               | 722                     | 21                        | 3.1                                    | 42                                 |
| Hawaii.....               | 605.9                 | 678                     | 26                        | 4.0                                    | 23                                 |
| Idaho.....                | 628.5                 | 574                     | 47                        | 3.4                                    | 31                                 |
| Illinois.....             | 5,816.8               | 803                     | 8                         | 4.2                                    | 13                                 |
| Indiana.....              | 2,889.9               | 664                     | 30                        | 2.8                                    | 46                                 |
| Iowa.....                 | 1,475.0               | 614                     | 41                        | 3.9                                    | 24                                 |
| Kansas.....               | 1,323.6               | 636                     | 35                        | 4.6                                    | 7                                  |
| Kentucky.....             | 1,772.9               | 651                     | 32                        | 3.8                                    | 27                                 |
| Louisiana.....            | 1,909.2               | 616                     | 39                        | 4.1                                    | 15                                 |
| Maine.....                | 610.7                 | 609                     | 43                        | 3.7                                    | 29                                 |
| Maryland.....             | 2,527.3               | 818                     | 7                         | 4.1                                    | 15                                 |
| Massachusetts.....        | 3,219.6               | 916                     | 3                         | 2.1                                    | 50                                 |
| Michigan.....             | 4,366.7               | 768                     | 12                        | 3.4                                    | 31                                 |
| Minnesota.....            | 2,664.7               | 760                     | 14                        | 2.3                                    | 49                                 |
| Mississippi.....          | 1,117.3               | 556                     | 49                        | 4.1                                    | 15                                 |
| Missouri.....             | 2,702.2               | 678                     | 26                        | 4.1                                    | 15                                 |
| Montana.....              | 424.9                 | 553                     | 50                        | 4.7                                    | 6                                  |
| Nebraska.....             | 905.4                 | 598                     | 44                        | 3.3                                    | 39                                 |
| Nevada.....               | 1,220.7               | 738                     | 17                        | 7.7                                    | 1                                  |
| New Hampshire.....        | 631.7                 | 754                     | 16                        | 5.2                                    | 3                                  |
| New Jersey.....           | 4,012.7               | 901                     | 5                         | 3.4                                    | 31                                 |
| New Mexico.....           | 784.8                 | 624                     | 36                        | 4.5                                    | 8                                  |
| New York.....             | 8,471.1               | 913                     | 4                         | 4.1                                    | 15                                 |
| North Carolina.....       | 3,855.7               | 665                     | 29                        | 4.1                                    | 15                                 |
| North Dakota.....         | 333.2                 | 561                     | 48                        | 4.1                                    | 15                                 |
| Ohio.....                 | 5,376.0               | 693                     | 23                        | 3.1                                    | 42                                 |
| Oklahoma.....             | 1,465.3               | 594                     | 45                        | 2.8                                    | 46                                 |
| Oregon.....               | 1,683.2               | 687                     | 25                        | 2.5                                    | 48                                 |
| Pennsylvania.....         | 5,620.2               | 737                     | 19                        | 3.8                                    | 27                                 |
| Rhode Island.....         | 487.7                 | 720                     | 22                        | 3.4                                    | 31                                 |
| South Carolina.....       | 1,823.5               | 621                     | 38                        | 4.4                                    | 10                                 |
| South Dakota.....         | 387.4                 | 543                     | 51                        | 3.4                                    | 31                                 |
| Tennessee.....            | 2,695.7               | 670                     | 28                        | 3.4                                    | 31                                 |
| Texas.....                | 9,592.4               | 738                     | 17                        | 4.5                                    | 8                                  |
| Utah.....                 | 1,120.9               | 622                     | 37                        | 3.2                                    | 41                                 |
| Vermont.....              | 304.1                 | 644                     | 33                        | 1.6                                    | 51                                 |
| Virginia.....             | 3,618.9               | 787                     | 10                        | 5.5                                    | 2                                  |
| Washington.....           | 2,825.2               | 761                     | 13                        | 3.4                                    | 31                                 |
| West Virginia.....        | 703.0                 | 612                     | 42                        | 3.9                                    | 24                                 |
| Wisconsin.....            | 2,794.2               | 663                     | 31                        | 3.1                                    | 42                                 |
| Wyoming.....              | 267.0                 | 616                     | 39                        | 5.1                                    | 5                                  |
| Puerto Rico.....          | 1,039.3               | 418                     | (5)                       | 2.7                                    | (5)                                |
| Virgin Islands.....       | 44.3                  | 639                     | (5)                       | 3.7                                    | (5)                                |

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

(2) Data are preliminary.

(3) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(5) Data not included in the national ranking.